

# FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS: EXERCISES IN POLITICAL THEORY

## Gov 1011 Fall 2019

Professor Yarbrough  
Office Hours: Tu-Th 4:30-6:00 pm and by appointment

Office: Hubbard Tower  
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This course seeks to introduce students to some of the fundamental questions of political life: What is the relationship of the individual to the political community? What is the purpose of political life? Virtue? Freedom? Glory? What is virtue? How does the classical understanding of virtue differ from the Biblical view on the one hand and the modern view on the other? What is the significance of human nature for politics? What is the relationship of property to justice and liberty? Of religion and politics? Are men and women equal? How should we live and what may we hope for?

The following books are required and are available from our virtual partner, eCampus at <https://bowdoin.ecampus.com/>, or from Amazon or another online bookseller. Please use the editions listed, as translations can vary widely. Since we will be reading these texts closely, it is essential that students can easily locate the passages under discussion.

Plato, *Four Texts on Socrates*, trans. West (Cornell)  
Aristotle, *Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., trans. Lord (Chicago)  
*The Bible*, Authorized King James Version (Oxford)  
Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Mansfield (Chicago)  
John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Harlan Davidson)  
Jean Jacques Rousseau, *First and Second Discourses*, trans. Masters (St. Martin's)  
Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Mansfield & Winthrop (Chicago)

I have also placed a number of readings on E-Reserve, which can be accessed through the Library website. Go to the home page, click on Course Reserves and find the link either by course or instructor. **N.B. THIS IS NOT BLACKBOARD.**

Aristotle, Selections from *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Leon Kass, "A Genealogy of Justice"  
The Declaration of Independence  
Selections from *The Federalist Papers*  
Selections from *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*

**Strongly recommended:** Strunk and White, *Elements of Style*. Since this course is writing intensive, you will benefit from consulting this helpful guide as you write your papers.

### Course Requirements:

Students are required to prepare one or at most two questions about each day's reading. We shall use these questions as a jumping off point for our classroom discussion and textual analysis. I will collect these entries after each class and grade them broadly. **No hand-written questions!** You are permitted

occasional extensions, but as a rule, you must have them prepared and ready to hand in. **They should not exceed one quarter of a page.**

Students are required to write five “thought papers” on assigned topics of **no more than four pages** on the readings. (Part of good writing is concision.) These will usually include analysis of two readings. In writing these papers, students must confine themselves to the text(s) and not consult any secondary source materials. Failure to observe this rule will be penalized and, if sources are unattributed, will lead to charges of academic dishonesty. Papers must be typed **and stapled**. They are due at the **beginning** of class. (If a student cuts class to finish the paper and turns it in after class, it will be considered late.) Hard copy only; please do not email me your papers. Students are also responsible for that day’s reading assignment as well as the daily question, so organization and time management are essential. Late papers will be penalized a minimum of five points. Papers are graded on argument and analysis as well as proper English usage. Run a spell check, but **also proofread**. The final paper will be due by 5:00 pm on Wednesday, Dec. 11, the last day of the fall term.

I encourage students to consult with me during regularly scheduled office hours. It is most helpful if you come with an outline of what you have been thinking about writing.

Course grade will be determined as follows:

Five papers	75%
Class participation and daily questions	25%

Reading Assignments:

Sept. 5	Introductory remarks
Sept. 10	<i>Apology of Socrates</i> , from Plato’s <i>Four Texts on Socrates</i>
Sept. 12	<i>Crito</i> , from Plato’s <i>Four Texts on Socrates</i>
Sept. 17	Selections from Aristotle’s <i>Ethics</i> , Book II (ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE)
Sept. 19	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book I, chs. 1-7
Sept. 20	<b>First paper on Apology and Crito due by 5:00 pm in Government Office</b>
Sept. 24	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book I, chs. 8-13
Sept. 26	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book III, chs. 1-9
Oct. 1	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book III, chs. 10-18
Oct. 3	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book IV, chs. 1-13
Oct. 8	<i>Bible</i> , Genesis, chs. 1-22; Exodus, chs. 19-20, 32-34 Leon Kass, “A Genealogy of Justice” (ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE)

Oct. 10	<i>Bible</i> , Gospel of Matthew, chs. 5-25
Oct. 11	<b>Second paper on Aristotle due by 5:00 pm in Government Office</b>
Oct. 15	<b>Fall Break—No Class</b>
Oct. 17	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , Dedicatory Letter, chs. 1-5
Oct. 22	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , chs. 6-9
Oct. 24	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , chs. 10-15
Oct. 29	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , chs. 16-21, 25-26
Oct. 31	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , chs. 1-4
Nov. 5	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , chs. 5-6
Nov. 7	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , chs. 7-9, 14, 19
Nov. 8	<b>Third paper on Bible and Machiavelli due by 5:00 pm in Government Office</b>
Nov. 12	The Declaration of Independence (ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE) <i>The Federalist</i> # 1, 10, 37, 51, 72 (ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE) Selections from <i>Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin</i> (ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE)
Nov. 14	Rousseau, <i>Second Discourse</i> , pp. 78-98 <u>plus Rousseau's notes</u>
Nov. 19	Rousseau, <i>Second Discourse</i> , pp. 101-141 <u>plus notes</u>
Nov. 21	Rousseau, <i>Second Discourse</i> , pp. 141-161 <u>plus notes</u>
Nov. 26	Rousseau, <i>Second Discourse</i> , pp. 161-181 <u>plus notes</u>
Nov. 28	<b>Thanksgiving—No Class</b>
Dec. 3	Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , pp. 3-15, 52-53, 235-251, 275-288, 407-428
Dec. 5	No class
Dec. 6	<b>Fourth Paper on Locke and Rousseau due by 5:00 pm in Government Office</b>
Dec. 10	Tocqueville, pp. 479-492, 500-522, 643-676 <b>FINAL WRAP UP: DESSERT THAT NIGHT AT 7:00 AT MY HOME</b>

**Final paper due Wednesday, Dec. 11 by 5:00 pm, though I am happy to grant extensions for this one assignment.**